

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

5 1. An image processing apparatus comprising:
 a storage device that stores scene information including, at least, data for a
 representative frame of a scene, data for an interval of the scene and data for
 a hierarchical level of the scene of each of a plurality of scenes included in a
 moving picture that is subject to a playback;

10 a display device that reads images of the representative frames of the
 plurality of scenes from the storage device and chronologically displays the
 images based on an external designation of the hierarchical level; and

15 a playback device that plays back the scene corresponding to the images of
 the representative frames displayed by the display device based on an
 external playback instruction.

20 2. An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the
 display device chronologically displays a specified number of the images of the
 representative frames of the plurality of scenes concurrently.

25 3. An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein
 the display device refers to the scene information in the storage device when
 a hierarchical level is externally designated, and chronologically displays
 images of the representative frames of the scenes having the hierarchical
 level designated and above.

4. An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the images of the representative frames included reduced images.

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5. An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the display device displays the images of the representative frames with data indicative of the hierarchical level corresponding to the representative frames being added to the images of the representative frames.

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6. An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the display device displays the scene played back by the playback device together with the images of the representative frames of the scenes, and displays data for discriminating representative frames corresponding to the scene being currently played back from the other representative frames.

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7. An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the display device changes a display condition in the images of the representative frames of the scenes that are chronologically displayed based on an external instruction.

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8. An image processing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the display device changes a display condition in the images of the representative frames of the scenes that are chronologically displayed, synchronizing with the images being played back by the playback device.

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9. An image processing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the display device changes a display condition and selects whether change of the display condition is synchronized with the images being played back by the playback device, based on an external instruction.

10. An image processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the playback device plays back one of the scenes corresponding to one of the images of the representative frames of the scenes, which is externally designated among the images of the representative frames of the scenes displayed by the display device.

11. An image processing apparatus comprising:
a storage device that stores scene information including, at least, data for a representative frame of a scene and data for a hierarchical level of the scene of each of a plurality of scenes included in a moving picture that is subject to a playback; and
a display device that reads images of the representative frames of the plurality of scenes from the storage device and chronologically displays the images based on an external designation of the hierarchical level.

12. An image processing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the display device refers to the scene information in the storage device when a hierarchical level is externally designated, and chronologically displays images of the representative frames of the scenes having the hierarchical level designated and above.

13. An image processing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the images of the representative frames included reduced images.

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14. An image processing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the display device displays the images of the representative frames with data indicative of the hierarchical level corresponding to the representative frames being added to the images of the representative frames.

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15. An image processing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein the display device changes a display condition in the images of the representative frames of the scenes that are chronologically displayed based on an external instruction.

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16. An image processing method comprising:

storing scene information including, at least, data for representative

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frame of a scene, data for interval of the scene and data for a hierarchical level of the scene of each plurality of scenes included in a moving picture that is subject to a playback;

designating a hierarchical level;

chronologically displaying images of the representative frames of the

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scenes stored in the storing step, based on an external designation of the hierarchical level; and

playing back the scene corresponding to the images of the representative frames displayed by the display device based on an external playback instruction.

17. An image processing apparatus according to claim 16, wherein the display step chronologically displays a specified number of the images of the representative frames of the plurality of scenes concurrently.

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18. An image processing method according to claim 16, wherein the images of the representative frames included reduced images.

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19. An image processing method according to claim 16, wherein the display step displays the images of the representative frames with data indicative of the hierarchical level corresponding to the representative frames being added to the images of the representative frames.

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20. An image processing method according to claim 16, wherein the display step displays the scene played back in the playback step together with the images of the representative frames of the scenes, and displays data for discriminating representative frames corresponding to the scene being currently played back from the other representative frames.

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21. An image processing method according to claim 16, wherein the display step changes a display condition in the images of the representative frames of the scenes that are chronologically displayed based on an external instruction.

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22. An image processing method according to claim 20, wherein the display step changes a display condition in the images of the representative frames of the scenes that are chronologically displayed, synchronizing with the images being played back in the playback step.

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23. An image processing method according to claim 20, wherein the display step changes a display condition and selects whether changes of the display condition is synchronized with the images being played back in the playback step, based on an external instruction.

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24. An image processing method according to claim 16, wherein the playback step plays back one of the scenes corresponding to one of the images of the representative frames of the scenes, which is externally designated among the images of the representative frames of the scenes displayed in the display step.

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25. An image processing method comprising:

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storing scene information including, at least, data for a representative frame of a scene and data for a hierarchical level of the scene of each of a plurality of scenes included in a moving picture that is subject to a playback; and

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chronologically displaying images of the representative frames of the plurality of scenes stored in the storing step based on an external designation of the hierarchical level.

26. An image processing method according to claim 25, wherein the display step refers to the scene information in the storage device when a hierarchical level is externally designated, and chronologically displays images of the representative frames of the scenes having the hierarchical level designated and above.

27. An image processing method according to claim 25, wherein the images of the representative frames included reduced images.

28. An image processing method according to claim 25, wherein the display step displays the images of the representative frames with data indicative of the hierarchical level corresponding to the representative frames being added to the images of the representative frames.

29. An image processing method according to claim 25, wherein the display step changes a display condition in the images of the representative frames of the scenes that are chronologically displayed based on an external instruction.

30. A computer readable storage medium that stores image processing program codes for playing back a moving picture, the computer readable storage medium storing:

a code for storing scene information including, at least, data for a representative frame of a scene, data for an interval of the scene and data for a hierarchical level of the scene of each of a plurality of scenes included in a moving picture that is subject to a playback;

a code for chronologically displaying images of the representative frames of plurality of the scenes stored in the storing step based on an external designation of the hierarchical level; and

a code for playing back the scene corresponding to the images of the representative frames displayed in the display step based on an external playback instruction.

31. A computer readable storage medium that stores image processing program codes for playing back a moving picture, the computer readable storage medium storing:

a code for storing scene information including, at least, data for a representative frame of a scene and data for a hierarchical level of the scene of each of a plurality of scenes included in a moving picture that is subject to a playback;

a code for chronologically displaying images of the representative frames of the plurality of scenes stored in the storing step based on an external designation of the hierarchical level.